

November 4, 2013

The Honorable Lisa Posthumus  
Chair  
House Education Committee  
Michigan House of Representatives  
Lansing, MI

Dear Representative Lyons and members of the Education Committee:

I am writing to you to express my overwhelming and exuberant support for HB 5112. I applaud Representative Lyons and this bill, the clarity it can potentially offer, and the benefits that can and will flow from it. Education is a subject I am passionate about for many reasons. I have children in my life close to me whose education and development I am overseeing. I have no more important responsibility and it consumes me as I write this because I want the best for them. This has compelled me to be an active advocate for reform and to push for the best possible education and outcomes for them. This issue also affects my business. I am a Licensed Real Estate Agent in Oakland County. As someone that is self-employed as a registered Limited Liability Company I am a walking talking small business. This issue is one that is front and center in my industry. Home buyers so often have the quality of local schools at the top of their list when making buying decisions. It is something NAR has tracked and studied for decades for that very reason so this issue affects me both personally and professionally. When I am out in the field with my clients they are seeking guidance and insight into the quality of the schools around a home they are considering for their families. They are currently presented with confusing, hard to interpret and often non-existent metrics. As you may know, under law, we as Realtors cannot give our qualitative opinion in this matter so we have to refer them to current systems like the AYP or the disaster that is the color code system. They find that there is little real data available and what is available is confusing and unhelpful. We can and should do better. We owe it not only to home buyers and their agents but to the children we are preparing for life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Is this really the best we can do? The research is there; accountability and clarity drive results and therefore success. I see that and apply it in my own business every day. A letter grade system would be a simple, common sense solution to this problem. It is being applied successfully in states across the country and has even worked in private industries like the food industry. Isn't the quality of the education we offer the children of this great state as important as food quality, and if it isn't, just what does that mean? We are trying to attract and keep the best and brightest of our country to come here, work and raise their families. How are we to compete if we fall behind on this or continue to fail to do the absolute best we can for our kids.

Results matter, accountability matters, and what you do going forward matters. We are watching, closely.

Thank you

Respectfully,

Jeffrey N. Raupp  
Realtor  
Holly, MI

